

CDXC Newsletter

CHILTERN DX CLUB
The UK DX Foundation

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CDXC - The UK DX Foundation

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DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: OCTOBER 7th

EDITORIAL Alan Jubb, G3PMR

One of the great things about amateur radio is the social aspect; meeting people you've QSO'd, putting faces to call signs, coming across people you haven't heard of/from for years, and nattering about DX and other aspects of amateur radio. A couple of months ago I got myself operational on 2m mobile with a hand held, and was recently driving in South Humberside, where I cut my teeth as an SWL & where I got my A licence (it was Lincolnshire in those days!). I was using the Lincoln repeater, when I was called by Frank, G3OS. This was one of those unforgettable amateur radio experiences -

Frank had been my mentor as an SWL, and when working for my ticket, and as he worked in a TV repair shop, was also a great source of cheap bits and pieces. I hadn't seen or heard from Frank for about 30 years, so we obviously had a lot of catching up to do! It transpired that my route would take me very close to Frank's QTH, so a quick detour was arranged and an eyeball QSO resulted. Unforgettable! We talked about lots of radio related subjects, including CDXC - Frank wishes to be remembered in particular to G3RZP and G3OZF.

My HF operating has been almost none existent in the last couple of months,

mainly due to long days at the salt mine, so have missed most of the DX happenings. I was unable to be operational during the IOTA Contest; however, from what I've heard, it was an outstanding event, so I hope it will be repeated on an annual basis, in which case I'll make a big effort to be involved next year! Congratulations to all who conceived of and organized the event. Controversy still abounds regarding Romeo's 5A DXpedition. However, he now seems to be safely back in Moscow, planning a DXpedition to 3V. QSLs for the 5A trip are arriving. Another hot topic is the status of Pratas (Pratus?), and whether it will count as a separate DXCC country. It seems very marginal on DXCC Country Criteria, Point 2: Separation by Water. It's good to see that at last the DXCC backlog is down to practically nothing. I must send my cards off in the near future! I see that CDXC's entry into the 1993 SSB AFS contest achieved fourth place. Congratulations to G3OZF, G4BUO & G0HSD.

Although I haven't had time to do much operating, I *have* found time to buy the necessary to improve my HF signal, and am now the proud owner of a Cushcraft A3S and Yaesu G1000SDX rotator, sitting at about 35 feet. Not a megastation, but it should be a definite improvement over my W3DZZ! I say should, because it was only put in the sky the day before I am writing this, and still needs further work to tune it properly. Getting it up was a real marathon - it took Mike, G4PFF, and myself about seven hours to get it from a fully assembled state on the ground to its final position - mainly due to the very cramped space we had to work in (definitely no room for a tilt over!). As I write this it's pouring with rain, so the final tuning of the antenna has been shelved until the WX improves! I'm hoping to have it fully operational for the forthcoming DXpeditions, including Mellish and ZD9.

I also managed to find time to attend two social events, the barbecue at G/OZ7SM, which is reported on elsewhere in this newsletter, and a small get together with A35KB. The latter wasn't strictly a CDXC function; however, apart from A35KB, all the attendees were CDXC members and XYLS. This function was organized by Neville, G3NUG, and was held at a restaurant in Hemel Hempstead. CDXC members attending were G3KMA, G3NUG, G3PMR, G3XTT, G3ZAY, G4PFF, & VS6CT. A very pleasant evening was had by all.

Paul, G4BKI, reports that he will be leaving the UK in early October to take up a new position in Florida. Best wishes, Paul, and many thanks for all you've done for CDXC in the past. I'm sure we'll be hearing you on the HF bands from Florida.

This, of course, is the final Newsletter before the HF Convention; it looks like being a good one, so I hope you've all booked! I look forward to meeting both old and new faces there. 73 *Alan, G3PMR*

Jottings by the Secretary Dave Mann, G0HXN

Well, I hope you enjoyed the IOTA Contest, congrats to all involved. Although I could not take full advantage of the contest, I managed to give a few points away, and work five new Islands, not a great deal I agree, but all I could muster in my lunch hour. Hopefully, there will be a repeat next year, and I will be able to take full advantage, and also make a reasonable entry. Our illustrious Chairman, John, gave a very interesting, and informative, talk on Berkshire Radio on his forthcoming trip to Mellish Reef. My works QTH has that particular programme on all day, so I managed to record the item, and fielded many questions from my colleagues, who are more convinced than ever that radio

amateurs are potty!! But at least it did encourage three of them to enquire about taking the RAE. When you consider that the programme went out mainly to Berkshire, it makes me wonder how many extra recruits we could raise into the hobby if we had the same sort of service that the Dutch Amateurs have. There, the National Association has access to Radio Hilversum, and puts out many interesting items on Amateur Radio, and DXing during the course of a month. I read in RadCom that a member of staff was interviewed on radio, which occupied several lines, Mellish Reef DXpedition attracted slightly less column inches. It makes me wonder where they get their information from, or who edits it? This club was much involved with the VP8SSI DXpedition, and will be again in the near future with Peter 1st Island. It is sad I think that expeditions such as these which pass through our shores are not given national support. Bren, G4DYO, is co-ordinating the Club's support in January for the team, if you benefit from these trips, and when you at last manage to best the pile-up and eventually get the QSL card, just think of the time, money, and personal commitment that they have given to DXing. John, G3WGV, I think put it in perspective for me when he said "the worst thing is that I need Mellish Reef".

Do any of you out there remember Geoffrey, G3CDR, a white stick operator from the Croydon area, who sadly died two years ago? He introduced me to DXing, and was a great friend for several years. I learnt recently that Betty, his wife, who is also white stick, has passed her RAE with flying colours, and will shortly take her morse exam. G3CDR will then be resurrected, and hopefully, Betty will qualify within a short space of time for membership of the Club.

Hopefully, I will be able to meet most of you at the Convention in October. I am still looking for volunteers for transporting our

guests around.73 & good DX. Dave.

TREASURER's NOTES Mike Potter, G4PFF.

Hello all! Another reminder to those who haven't yet renewed their subscription - please let me have a cheque for £10.00, payable to Chiltern DX Club, ASAP. *Remember that this is the last Newsletter that those who have not renewed will receive.* The following is a list of those members I have on record as having paid - if you think you have paid, but are not listed below, please get in touch.

BR547426, G/OZ7SM, G0DQS, G0GLB, G0GRK, G0HGW, G0HXN, G0JZA, G0KTN, G0KUB/5B4MF, G0LRH, G0MGM, G0MMI, G0NVP, G0OHV, G0SLY/K3RV, G3AEZ, G3CAQ, G3COJ, G3DPX/N6UH, G3ESY, G3EZZ, G3FKM, G3GAF, G3GHS, G3HCT, G3HTA, G3KIW, G3KMA, G3LZQ, G3MCX, G3NKG, G3NKS, G3NOB, G3NOF, G3NOH, G3NUG, G3PJT, G3PMR, G3PSM, G3RTE, G3RUR, G3RZP, G3SJX, G3SNN, G3SWH, G3SXW, G3TLG, G3UML, G3USX, G3VOF, G3VXZ, G3WGN, G3WGV, G3XMZ, G3YBT, G3ZAY, G3ZBA, G4ASL, G4AZN, G4BUE, G4BUO, G4CCZ, G4CJY, G4CMT, G4DIL, G4DQW, G4DYO, G4ENZ, G4IJW, G4IPR, G4LJF, G4MUT, G4NXG, G4ODV, G4PFF, G4SVB, G4TNB, G4UXG, G4UZN, G4WVX, G4YRR, G6LX, GM0EGI, GM3BQA, GM4UZY, GW3CBA, K3ZO, ON/G4RTO, P29DX, VS6CT

LETTERS

Hello, Alan. Thanks for the interesting Newsletter - keep up the good work. I joined CDXC because it has the elite of British DXing amongst its members, and by joining, I could learn by example the techniques of DXing, and hopefully, become a better operator. I would like to thank Don (G3OZF) and Chris Beatty for

their hospitality during the recent IARU Championships which I enjoyed and learned quite a lot. Put me down for next year's, hi! As a rule, I usually take part in CQ WW CW from home, but maybe this year will be different! 73 de **Clive Dodd, G3XMZ**.

IS DXING REALLY FUN? PART II

Andrew Shaw, G0HSD

I read with some distress the comments made by G4DYO in the last CDXC Newsletter about DXing and the attitude of "one of the junior-ops".

As a (the??) junior-op: Yes DXing *is* fun. That is why we do it. The same reason people run marathons, climb mountains or read books. It fulfils an inner human desire to be successful, to learn and experience new things.

DXing, to me (note this is *only* a personal opinion), is the key to a universe of new sensations, understanding and experience. Working stations is only a small part of the overall thrill. Talking to far flung countries and islands gives me immense pleasure, firstly in knowing that *my* station and operating skill has enabled me to contact VP8.... But secondly and most importantly, the contact momentarily transports me to this place. I am talking to someone *there*, I can find out anything from him about the wonderful place he happens to be perched on.

And this sense of excitement gets the better of me. I sort through the dusty book shelves in the second hand book shop for books on these places. I have built up a large collection of ancient books, including a first hand account from the Bounty and still this is not

enough! So fired by this curiosity for far away places, I became a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and now attend lectures by real experts *who have actually been there!* I have access to the ultimate DX library in the world, with first hand accounts by those who found the places.

But this is still not enough! I want to go there. Everywhere! See UA0, ZK1, 5Z4, OA for myself and give others the same thrill they gave me in making contacts from such places, telling them what they are like, fuelling their enthusiasm and thirst for knowledge.

It is for that reason that I disagree with Bren. *DX Is (a lot more than he thinks)*. Working new countries is always exciting. Pile ups are fun. But the abuse and abysmal behaviour which occurs from time to time turns me cold and takes the pleasure out of DXing. But working new countries is really only a part of the overall game. Bren's article seemed to brand such heretics as myself as Non-DXers (even with 318 worked) and basically asked why we joined CDXC. But my argument is that DXing is what you make it, whether you specialise in chasing only a very narrow part of the hobby or allow your senses to run riot. Everyone is entitled to their own view, and all aspects of the hobby should be given the same level of respect, even if they are not to our own taste. There is no right or wrong, we all have a place and no-one should be singled out and despised because he or she gets their kicks in slightly different way.

Well that is my opinion. Bren, of course, is entitled to his. And you are entitled to

yours! What is your opinion? What is DXing to you? Are you getting the most out of it and are you putting something back? Why not write to the Newsletter and ensure a healthy debate on the grass root subject on which the club was founded.

HELP!!

I am, or rather was, the owner of a VP8SSI video, until someone who shall be nameless, but whose initials are "X.Y.L." recorded another program over the top of it. Needless to say, it was "my fault" for not removing the cassette immediately after playing it, and further, needless to add that she didn't change the video channel, so didn't record she wanted to record. Now the irreversible damage has been done, I note that Bren has stated in DXNS that all copies have been sold, so I am hopeful that there is a helpful member out there to whom I can post my desecrated cassette who will make a back to back recording for me in return for the reply postage. The phone number here is 0209 820193. DXers be on your guard against careless vandals, and disable your re-record facility NOW! **Brian Coyne, G4ODV.**

WELCOME!

On behalf of the Committee I would like to welcome the following new members to CDXC:

G0NVP Penny Church	Saffron Walden, Essex
G4ENZ Martin Church	Saffron Walden, Essex
G0JZA Nigel Cox	Westbury on Trym, Avon

I hope you will all enjoy being members, and get involved with the various projects that are underway.

David Mann, G0HXX, Secretary

DX CALENDAR (Tnx, DXNS)

Til Sep 2	ZK1XR N Cooks	Sep 4-5	All Asian SSB Cst
Til Sep 3	EU-049 by I3s	Sep 4-5	RSGB SSB Field Day
Til Sep 15	7Q7CE by IN3VZE	Sep 4-11	V85XF by G3TXF
Til Sep 15	EU-131 IV3UHL	Sep 5	LZ DX CW Contest
Til Sep 16	NA-174 /VE8	Sep 8-13	C2 by JAs
Til Sep 18	ZK3DM by ON4QM	Sep 8-13	T32 by W/KH6
Til Sep 30	OO pfx by ONs	Sep 11-12	WAE SSB Contest
Til Oct	D2EL	Sep 11-12	Sp ON calls
Til Oct	5H3FOE by G0GWA	Sep 18-19	Scandinavian CW Contest
Til Oct 15?	EU-136 9A/DL9JH	Sep 19-29	Mellish Reef
Til Nov	HL93 prefix	Sep 22-30	VK9X by DLs
Til Dec	Antarc CE9OH	Sep 25-26	4U1ITU by Is
Til Dec	5Z4JD by F2JD	Sep 25-26	Scandinavian SSB Contest
Til Dec	EL2YD by F6FYD	Sep 25-26	CQWW RTTY Contest
Til Jan 94	ZD8VJ by G4ZVJ	Oct	VU Lacc/Andaman Is?
Til Mar 94	AN-017 FT5YE	Oct 1-13	VK9Y by DLs
Til Apr 94	S Geo VP8CKB	Oct 2-3	VK-ZL Oceania Contest
Til mid-94	JW5NM	Oct 3	RSGB 21/28 MHz SSB Cst
Til Aug 94	9X5AB by DF3ZJ	Oct 8-10	RSGB HF Convention
Til Aug 95	ET3JR by FD1PJQ	Oct 9-10	VK-ZL Oceania CW Cst
Aug	ZS9/OZ1EYE	Oct 17	RSGB 21/28 MHz CW Cst
Aug 25-Sep 21	4X/JH9XZG	Oct 30-31	CQWW SSB Contest
Aug 30 - ???	EU-111 by GM6UW/P	Oct/Nov?	5A0A by SP6RT?
Aug 31 - Sep 9	KH9 Wake Island	Nov 13-14	WAE RTTY Contest
Aug/Sep	9M8ACP	Nov 19-21	SEANET Conv, Dhaka
Sep 1-8	CY9R by VEs		

IOTA UPDATE

The following table lists the new IOTA references which have been issued since the publication of the March 1993 IOTA Directory: (Tnx, G3KMA)

**IOTA PFX ISLAND/GROUP
REF**

AF-060	C5	ATLANTIC COAST group (include <u>BIJOL IS</u> , etc)
AF-066	C9	MAPUTO/GAZA DISTRICT group (include <u>INHACA</u> , etc)
AF-067	SZ	COAST PROVINCE SOUTH group (include <u>FUNZI</u> , <u>WASINI</u> , etc)
AS-103	<u>BV7</u>	P'ENG-HU (PESCADORES) IS
AS-104	UA0B	KARA SEA COAST EAST group (include <u>NANSENA</u> , <u>PRAVDY</u> , <u>PRODOLGOVATYY</u> , <u>TAYMYR</u> , etc)
AS-105	HL2	KYONGGI-DO PROVINCE group - include <u>CHEBU</u> , <u>TAEBU</u> , <u>YONGHUNG</u> and islands....
AS-106	VU	MINICOY ISLAND
AS-107	HS	GULF OF THAILAND NORTH WEST group (include <u>KRAM</u> , <u>PAI</u> , <u>SAMET</u> , <u>SI CHANG</u> , etc)
EU-159	F	AQUITAINE REGION group (=BANC D'ARGUIN, CORDOUAN)
EU-161	UA1Z	BARENTS SEA COAST EAST group (include <u>KHARLOV</u> , <u>LUMBOVSKIY</u> , <u>NOKUYEV</u> , <u>VESHNYAK</u>)
EU-162	UA1Z	WHITE SEA COAST group (include <u>NAUMIKHA</u> , etc)
NA-181	VE7	ESTEVAN group
NA-182	VE8	NWT (INUVIK REGION) EAST group (include <u>BAILLIE IS</u> , <u>NICHOLSON</u> , etc)
NA-183	XE3	GUERRERO STATE group (include <u>GRANDE-IXTAPA</u> , <u>ROQUETA</u> , etc)
NA-184	W6	CALIFORNIA STATE NORTH group (include <u>CASTLE ROCK</u> and islands north of 38.8N)
NA-185	VE8	N.W.T. (KEEWATIN REGION) group (include <u>BIBBY</u> , etc)
OC-179	H4	DUFF IS
OC-180	V63	NGULU ATOLL
OC-181	P2	WITU IS
OC-182	VR6	DUCIE IS
OC-183	VK6	W. A. STATE (SW COAST) CENTRE group (include <u>BEAGLE</u> , <u>WEDGE</u> , etc)
OC-184	V85	BRUNEI'S coastal islands (include <u>MUARA BESAR</u> etc)
OC-185	VK8	N. T. (ARAFURA SEA COAST) EAST group (include <u>BREMER IS</u> , <u>WESSEL IS</u> , etc)
OC-186	YB2	KARIMUNJAWA IS
OC-187	VK4	QUEENSLAND STATE (NORTH COAST) NORTH group (include <u>FLINDERS GROUP</u> , <u>LIZARD</u> , etc)
OC-188	DU8	PANGUTARAN GROUP
OC-189	3D2	RINGGOLD ISLES
SA-045	PQ8	AMAPA STATE group (include <u>BAILIQUE</u> , <u>CURUA</u> , <u>MARACA</u> , etc)
SA-063	YV8	MONAGAS/DELTA AMACURO STATE group (include <u>COTORRA</u> and islands at the mouths of the Orinoco)
SA-064	CE7	AISEN PROVINCE group (include <u>LOS CHONOS</u> <u>ARCHIPELAGO</u> , <u>MAGDALENA</u> , etc)

FROM RUSSIA WITH LOGS

Andrew Shaw, G0HSD

The Official 4K4D and 4K4N Story

(From the book Now (that's what I call DXing) Vol. 1)

It started with a call from Roger, G3KMA in February. He thanked me for organising the CDXC annual dinner the night before and we had a general chat. He then turned the conversation to DXpeditioning. Having participated on several expeditions for the Islands On The Air award scheme, I was aware that Roger, the Director of the scheme, had been asked on several occasions to participate in expeditions all over the World. I remembered that a couple of years ago, he had been asked to join a trip to the Russian Arctic (the then Soviet Union) which he had gracefully turned down. Roger revealed that Victor, UB5LGM, was planning another trip to the Arctic in May and that he had asked Roger again if he would like to come along. Roger declined, but suggested me as a possible candidate. Victor was very keen that an Englishman should go on the trip and Roger asked me if I wanted to go.

The trip would be all expenses paid, except my air fare to Moscow. The sponsor was the son of the Number 2 in the Ukraine and that three million Roubles had been put forward for funds.

Wow! Of course I wanted to go. I told Roger that I would think about it: truth is I didn't need to think about it, but my boss did. I had only just come back from Florida and just before my departure I had caused a lot of discomfort for my

boss. But what the hell! This was a once in a lifetime offer. The next day I asked my immediate boss for leave. I carefully explained that I had been hand picked by the Ukrainians and that I would be representing the United Kingdom on an Anglo-Russian Expedition to the Arctic. Well we all have to embellish things from time to time! To my great surprise this was granted unconditionally and I called Roger on the Monday evening to confirm. He faxed the details through to Victor and the wheels were set in motion.

As the weeks passed, I did not receive any communication from Victor regarding the finer details or even the definite dates. Roger had told me that they were planning things for early May and by this time it was already April 5th and I was cutting it dangerously fine to get a visa, a cheap air ticket and a radio permit. I sent another message to Roger on the electronic mails system and waited. I got a telephone call from Roger on 6th April just as I stepped in from work. He had arranged a scheduled contact with Victor on 14295 kHz in a few minutes time. I ran up to the shack and turned the equipment on. I tuned in and heard Roger calling Victor. I logged into my computer logging system and checked to see if I had contacted Victor before. No, so this was a new one for both of us. We waited for a few minutes and the Victor appeared on frequency.

I had gathered from Roger that Victor was one of the new breed of Entrepreneurs in Russia, and that he had spent a lot of time in the United Kingdom setting up a new company. As a result, his English was very good and was

slanted with the usual accent one expects from that part of the world. I was very anxious to hear what was happening, as I knew no more at this stage than I had when Roger first called me six weeks beforehand.

Victor announced that the islands we would be visiting were located north of Dikson in Northern Siberia. We would be visiting three groups in all, Arkticheskogo Instituta Is. IOTA AS087, 75.5N 82E, Arkhipelag Nordenshel'da 77N 96E and the Kara Sea Coast East group, Nansena, Prodlgoavtyy and Taymyr Islands, 75.5-76.5N 91-100E. He announced that he hoped that we would leave Moscow between 20th and 25th of May, a little later than originally planned, as it would be extremely cold any earlier than that. We would be using the callsigns 4K4L, 4K4P and 4K4A, special event callsigns that would hopefully pull in the crowds. There was only one problem at the moment, and that was the transportation arrangements between Moscow and Dikson. He was trying to book an Aeroflot flight there, but they were insisting that my passages be paid in US dollars and not in Roubles. This would add considerably to the expense of the trip and it would be likely that I would have to find this sum myself. Victor said that he and Boris, UA3AX were currently working on a group ticket that could be paid for in roubles. All other transportation had been arranged successfully. I asked Victor about my visa, explaining that I needed a letter on invitation and a schedule of cities I would visit in order to obtain it. He replied that the letter would have to be written by Boris as he is a Russian whereas he was a Ukrainian and in these days of the CIS

neither had any connection with the other. As I was only visiting Russia I could see his point.

We ended our contact after three quarters of an hour having arranged to meet at the same time the following day after he had contacted Boris to see if he needed any other details for my letter of invitation, such as a date of birth. The next day Victor said that nothing else was required and to leave everything to him and Boris. They were working very hard to pull things together. The Dikson end of the trip was almost sorted and the Aeroflot problem was all that remained.

So now all I had to do was wait until Sunday 11th April for our next sked, and for Boris to fax my letter of invitation to Roger.

I then decided to do some reading. The obvious starting point was The Scott Polar Research Institute. The Scott Polar Research Institute proudly boasts that this library is the largest and most comprehensive collection of polar data and documentation in the world, and it is truly impressive. Filled with an air of confidence, we signed in and had a brief look around. The assistant librarian came over and explained how things were filed. She asked what we were looking for. "The Arkticheskogo Instituta Islands, Nordenshel'da Archipelago and a few others." Poor girl! She examined the computer records but there was nothing there at all. She advised me to have a look at the shelf on the Kara Sea, "Mostly in Russian...our Russian expert is away...pity you didn't phone before you came." She also directed me to the North

East Passage shelf, which might well be relevant to the investigation.

So I attacked the books, while my mother attacked the periodicals. This was going to be harder than we anticipated. I knew for sure that the Arkticheskogo Instituta Islands were not marked on Nansen's map drawn on his voyage in the *Fram* in 1893. So they were discovered in the last hundred years. After a brief look through the mainly Russian bookshelf a very helpful chap came over and translated the name into the Arctic Institute Islands. With this in mind I made for the card index and looked up "Arkticheskogo Instituta". This appeared to be the Soviet Arctic institute based in Leningrad. There were thousands of entries... all to do with any aspect of polar research, all irrelevant.

The night before I had started to read a chapter on the Kara Sea in Nansen's *Farthest North*. From the beginning he kept referring to Nordenskiöld and indeed his map denoted the Nordenshel'da Archipelago as the Nordenskiöld Archipelago. Interesting. Who was this Nordenskiöld? Perhaps he might have discovered something interesting.

I searched through the cards. Nordenskiöld had made a remarkable journey in his ship *Vega* approximately one hundred and twenty years before Nansen. He had a theory that Europe and Asia could be circumnavigated. This of course meant tackling the route thought to exist round the top of Russia, the North East Passage.

I found several references to him and discovered that I really should have heard

of him before as he had done a lot of work all over the world, produced many maps and appeared to be an expert on ancient maps and navigational techniques. I pulled his book *Voyage of the Vega* from a shelf hidden behind a corner, and started to read. The book was leather bound in red with a gold leaf oval frame on the cover. Inside the frame was the traditional map of the Europe/Asia land mass with a thin dotted line stretching from Sweden, round Siberia, past Japan, South East Asia, past India and eventually up the Suez canal and through the Mediterranean back to Europe. A truly remarkable picture.

I sat down and started reading. After he had cleared the Taymyr Peninsular, right at the eastern end of the Kara Sea, I realised he had seen nothing either. Slowly, it dawned on me what the problem was. All these great explorers like Nansen and Nordenskiöld were NOT INTERESTED IN ISLANDS. The sole purpose for their voyages was to navigate the North East Passage. They were doing their utmost to avoid islands, it was the clear, open sea they wanted. What chance did I have? It became obvious that these islands were probably of no value to anybody, and were more than likely to be ice bound for most of the year. Nobody was the slightest bit interested in them except for crazy DXpeditioners like me.

Almost defeated, I had a look at what my Mother had managed to rake out of the periodicals. Not a lot was the answer. Except one little gem. An article in *The Observer* reported that the Soviet Navy had illegally dumped 13 nuclear reactors, 17000 barrels of radioactive waste and one nuclear submarine in the Kara sea;

between 1969 and 1982! Must remember to take my wellies!!

So the sum total of our research was as follows: We knew that Arkticheskogo Instituta Islands were unknown one hundred years ago, and were probably discovered by the Arctic Institute in Leningrad. That Taymyr was also a class of Nuclear powered ice breaker (which gave me some sort of feel of the place!). Dikson was finally opened to foreigners in 1992, and that it was not a good idea to go swimming in the Kara Sea or dine on the delights of those waters once there. Not a great deal.

My head was beginning to ache. Despite the disappointment of not finding anything of any real use, we both felt that it had been a worthwhile visit and great fun. That evening I retired to the Plough at Cadsden for a pint and good search through *Farthest North*. I knew that there would be little of any real significance, but it would give me a feel for the Kara Sea and North East Passage area. There were a few people talking quietly. I ordered my beer and settle down around a corner by the fireplace and gazing at the shelf full of ancient tomes.

Right at the beginning of the Kara Sea chapter I got the feel of the place. Nansen wrote:

"At 4 o'clock in the morning (August 4th) we glided past Sokolii, or Hawk Island, out into the dreaded Kara Sea.

Now our fate was to be decided. I had always said that if we could get safely across the Kara Sea and

past Cape Chelyuskin, the worst would be over."

Nansen describes in intimate detail the great fog that surrounded the *Fram* through much of the Kara Sea. This explain why on his map at the back of Volume one of *Farthest North*, so many islands were missed...they had sailed right past them. They even missed the huge North Land. After leaving Port Dickson, they headed north in the general direction to the Arkticheskogo Instituta Islands. One of the crew spotted land and Nansen named this island 'Sverdrup' after the man that spotted it from the crows nest of the *Fram*.

The explorers made frequent stops on islands for food such as reindeer and bear. There is a lengthy and most interesting passage that describe in minute detail, their method for stalking deer with little or no ground cover.

As mentioned earlier, I now realised that these great men were not the least bit interested in islands. They wanted to pioneer the North East Passage and not make detailed studies of irrelevant islands. They only had a very narrow window of two months to clear the worst of Siberia before the ice once again encroached on the seaways. As Nansen says himself, much to my frustration:

"At this time we passed many islands and groups of islands. There was evidently plenty of occupation here, for anyone who could spare the time, in making a chart. Our voyage had another aim...."

The thought struck me: Has anyone *ever* been to these places? Not for any great length of time it would seem. Maybe the island has a group of old, mad, wild men, stranded when their inflatable boat burst in the 1950's and no one had rescued them? Anything was possible. All I could do was wait, ask Victor and see what turned up.

For the next few days I was in contact with Victor and Roger, and things were slowly starting to evolve. It was clear that the original start date had been put back a few weeks as time was short. Victor arranged for a letter of invitation to be sent to me and Roger duly passed this on to me in order that I might obtain a visa. What I needed more urgently was some definite dates. I had already asked my boss, but I needed to confirm with here the exact dates. Besides which, I needed to get an air ticket.

Victor went to Moscow to try and book everything up. As mentioned earlier, there was a problem with the Aeroflot internal flight. After three weeks of battling the news came through. Roger phoned me at work and said that Victor had told him over the phone that I should arrive in Moscow on the 25th of May and to be prepared to stay for at least two weeks. We would leave Moscow for the North on the 27th so that would give me a clear day to get sorted and to find Victor.

Victor had asked me if I could bring my triband yagi with me. No problem I said, except how to get it there. I had images of trying to explain the things away to the Russian immigration people...what do you say when you don't speak a word of their language! So I dismantled the beam

and carefully colour coded each of the components thereby ensuring a very fast reassemble in the frozen wastes. The only problem I had was a major one. The boom was ten feet long and the director and reflector elements were over fourteen feet in length! Oh hell! I decided that I would have to cut them in half and use a joining sleeve to reassemble them. The only problem being that this would considerably weaken the overall structure of the antenna. I decided to wait and got on with something else. By April 29th, Roger had sent me the letter of invitation, and I was ready to obtain my visa from the Russian Embassy. I booked the day off and headed into London on a mid morning train on a beautiful spring day. I eventually found my way to the embassy in Bayswater road and joined the queue. After an hour the queue had not moved., tempers were beginning to fray and feet started to shuffle. The embassy was only open from between 10am and 12.30pm for visas and I was almost at the end of a queue of forty people. I was very glad it was not raining. As I stood I marvelled at the flaky paint and untidy appearance of this wonderful Georgian building. This seemed to typify Russia now. An country like an overgrown garden with a senile gardener with rusty tools.

At 12.30pm the gate that had been shut for the duration suddenly opened and the throng charged through into the inner courtyard of the embassy. An official on the door apologised for the delay and said that no visas were being issued at the present time, but if we cared to come back at 2 o'clock, he would see what he could do. A huge groan went up. Blow that! Realising I still needed to get some passport photos done for my visa, I

headed through Hyde Park to Kensington High Street. I got the pictures taken and then called at a travel agents to see if they could do the arduous business of obtaining a visa for me. For a mere £20 they agreed. This now freed up the whole afternoon and I could now get on with things.

I walked down a very sunny Kensington Gore, past Hyde Park and the Royal Albert Hall, and in through the front door of the Royal Geographical Society. It was five to two and lunch had finished. I was famished, having been standing around for the whole morning with nothing to do but think about my stomach. I was in luck. I smiled sweetly at the girl in the Tea Room and helped myself to salad. I sat out in the garden, and then it suddenly occurred to me that the likes of Scott, Hunt, Fiennes and Mallory had all sat in the same garden and used the facilities of the RGS to plan their mammoth expeditions. I was truly in the right place for my studies and certainly in the best company.

I finished my lunch and coffee and walked up the majestic stairway, past many pictures of my heroes, to the library. The library of the Royal Geographical Society is the best in the world and houses all the plans, reports and many artefacts of many of the worlds greatest expeditions, as well as a huge number of books and periodicals on every part of the world. I left my jacket and bags at the entrance and headed for the index. I was hoping to borrow a copy of *The Voyage Of The Vega*. I hoped that Nordenskiöld might at least give me a further insight into the character of the area even if he had not been to any of the

islands in question. I found the reference and made my way to case 151 shelf D. Nothing there, it was out, damn. Never mind, I thought, NS made my way back to the index. I found the "ARCTIC - SIBERIA" draw and searched though the material on the Kara Sea. As expected there was very little. Plenty on biology and plankton, walrus and whales but nothing on the islands I was hoping to visit.

This was getting desperate. I had now resigned myself to the fact that there was little information in existence, and that what did exist was deep in the heart of Russia at the Arctic Institute, probably buried in a vault along with all sorts of other forgotten facts.

I had a good mooch about and then made my way downstairs again to the Map Room. I filled in an enquiry form and the chap came over and I explained what I was after. He said that there were very few maps of that area. He had a set of ONC maps that he kindly fetched and I was at least able to glean some information from them. The Arkticheskogo Instituta Islands were clearly marked. They are a group spreading some 27 miles, the largest Island measuring fifteen miles long by thirteen miles wide and only rises to the height of eighty two feet above sea level. This would suggest, along with being above the tree line, that it would be covered in tundra and made of alluvial deposits, just as Nansen had described the other islands nearby. This would also mean that it would be extremely cold. There were no buildings on the map, and Victor was not sure on that point either. I now realised that his suggestion of only

staying for ten to twelve hours if there was no shelter was pretty wise. The other islands were a little better. There were buildings marked on both the Nordenshel'da Archipelago as well as a small island to the North of Nansen. These were a little higher in elevation which seemed to suggest they were rockier than the Arkticheskogo Instituta Islands.

I was, however, still in the dark. The only way to gain any more information would be to go there in person. Off into the unknown. I only hoped those who would be helping us in the north knew more about the area than I did.

It was getting very close to my departure date and things were hotting up. I was in almost daily contact with Victor on 14.295 MHz and I had faxed a copy of my UK ham licence to Boris Stepanov, Editor of 'Radio Magazine', who would set about getting my licence.

(to be continued...)

A DXPEDITION TO THE OTHER CHANNEL ISLANDS (NA144 and NA66)

Martin Atherton, G3ZAY

The impetus for this expedition came from a special British Airways Air Miles promotion to mark the launch of their Manchester-Los Angeles service. Only 2500 Air Miles needed for the round-trip. I was quickly signed up for a one week visit to include the Visalia weekend, and looked around for some nearby islands to activate.

There is an un-numbered group along the central Californian coast but unhappily it appears to have no qualifying islands. The Farallons, off San Francisco, are rare but

almost impossible to get landing permission for. That left the Channel Islands: the northern group (off Santa Barbara and Ventura) NA144, and the southern group (off Los Angeles) NA66. The latter looked very easy to visit; Santa Catalina only 26 miles off Long Beach is a holiday resort with a permanent population of 3000 and boats every couple of hours from Long Beach and San Pedro. I knew from the photo on my W6CR QSL card that the only town of Avalon is located in a north-east facing bay surrounded by high hills, so I called the tourist information office to find if there were any hotels on top of the hills. The best they could do were the "Inn on Mount Ada" - which sounded promising, and the "Zane Grey Pueblo". The Inn had some rooms available but at a price of £300 per night! The Zane Grey was fortunately much more affordable, had plenty of space available, and did not sound too alarmed by the prospect of a DXpedition in its grounds. It proved to be even more suitable when I arrived and discovered that there were no TVs or phones in the rooms: Zane Grey was a prolific author of novels about the wild west and the "Pueblo" having been his home on the island prides itself on maintaining a slightly primitive atmosphere.

Researching NA144 was almost as easy. The tourist information office in Ventura gave me the phone numbers of the park HQ and the boat operator "Island Packers" which holds the transportation franchise from the park service. Camping on Anacapa was no problem and I soon had a reservation to go out on Sunday April 18th and return the following evening.

A few months later I was ready on the dockside on Sunday morning with a couple of car batteries (one of them removed from my rental car!) and was joined by Steve, G0CKP, who I had met at Visalia and who had decided to come along for the day. The weather seemed very suitable and reports

from the island suggested the landing stage was quite accessible. Sadly, the wind gradually increased as we covered the 15 miles across to the island and by the time we arrived (after a 30 minute detour following a small whale) there was a 6-8 foot swell hitting the jetty and the park service pronounced it unusable. We waited in the lee of the island for a further hour but there was no change in the conditions so the boat headed back to Ventura Harbour leaving behind a bunch of unhappy campers faced with another night on the island.

During the return journey it seemed as though I would have a number of options for returning to Anacapa the following day as there was talk of sending out an early boat before dawn to collect the campers, as well as rescheduling some of the other boats to call at Anacapa on their way to/from the other islands in the group. Sadly these options were ruled out by the management when we reached Ventura and I was faced with the prospect of maybe one hour of operating time the following afternoon (21-22z).

There was just one other possibility, a charter flight to Santa Cruz Island (adjacent to Anacapa) from Oxnard airport a few miles down the road. A small part of Santa Cruz is privately owned, and operates a camp site and bunkhouse for backpackers and kayakers. We quickly established that the airline could fly us out that afternoon, but only if we could get permission for the visit from the owner. His mainland phone number had an answering machine saying he was on the island but would get back to us on his return. Not promising to say the least but fortunately the boat company had the number of his message pager and he returned our page almost immediately from a cellphone he'd taken with him.

There was no problem with permission so by 4 p.m. we were aboard a twin engined Partenavia for the 15 minute hop to Santa Cruz. The regular landing strip was unusable because of high cross-winds so the pilot followed standard procedure by buzzing the farm-house to alert the caretaker that we'd be using the alternate strip a mile or two away. This proved to be a simple uphill landing directly into wind and we soon had our gear stacked by the wooden shack labelled "Santa Cruz International Airport".

The caretaker met us in his ATV (All Terrain Vehicle) and trailer for the 30 minute journey down to Scorpion Ranch. ("Why do you suppose they picked that name?" Steve asked me later as we were pitching the tent!) The location did not look very promising at first as we were at the bottom of a steep sided valley, but on the beach a few hundred yards away we found almost 180 degrees of clear northerly takeoff.

Initial QSOs were mostly with the USA but there was the occasional SP on 10 MHz and around 0530z there was a 40 minute opening to Europe on 7MHz. G3PJT, G3XTT, and G3AAE made it into the log down there but on the whole we had few callers. By 0600z 20m was open to northern and eastern Europe but nothing could be heard from the UK. The QSO rate slowed down as the Ws went to bed so we set the alarm for 1300z and tried to get some sleep - not easy with waves crashing onto the beach only yards away and assorted animals (including a skunk to judge by the smell) investigating the tent.

The band was still fairly quiet at 1300z so we left the receiver running on 14260 and continued to snooze until at 1330z we heard several G stations asking the Ws if we were active. W3KH's response that we were probably asleep was over-ridden by my call and an incredulous "Is that you

Martin?" from G4WFZ. The band was well and truly open.

We went QRT at around 2000z and were back at Oxnard airport by 1700 local time. Steve headed back to Los Angeles for work and I checked into a local motel prior to heading south for Santa Catalina on Tuesday. I had originally made a reservation on the 1530 boat from San Pedro but wanted to visit a friend in LA so asked for a place on the last available sailing which the sales-person said was at 1900. Arriving at the Catalina terminal at 1710 I was horrified to find they had made a mistake and there was no 1900 service that day. The 1700 was just disappearing into the sunset! My only option seemed to be another flight and I was lucky to find that Rolling Hills Aviation had a small Cessna going out from Torrance airport (about 8 miles from San Pedro) at 1800.

It was worth the extra money just for the views. A climb to 4500 feet over Palos Verdes (the former site of W6AM's Rhombic Farm - though I couldn't see any trace of it amongst the modern housing estates that have sprung up) and a gradual descent to Catalina's "Airport in the Sky"; a short tarmac runway on a plateau 1600 feet asl. "Don't bother looking for the lifejackets" said the pilot as I rummaged under my seat, "we don't carry them as I reckon we could glide in if the engine fails". "Pull the other one I thought" looking at the 26 mile channel. "But if we have problems it's probably easier to ditch near one of those boats and let them fish us out" he added reassuringly. Clearly a graduate of the Bob Newhart school of piloting. I was expecting his next line to be "Which of those islands do you suppose is Catalina?" Or worse still "You wouldn't have any pills for double vision on you?"

But all was well and I was in good time for the 7 p.m. shuttle bus down the mountain to Avalon and the Zane Grey Pueblo. The

Butternut was quickly assembled and lashed to my balcony railings above a steep 200 foot drop to the sea. Takeoff looked to be reasonably good both short and long path to Europe so it was with a degree of optimism that I switched on the rig.....and heard VK9NS on 14260 complaining about the terrible conditions.

He was right. There was no 40m opening at 0530z and no sign of Europe at 1400z. I decided to settle down to a relaxing day, left the receiver running on 14260 and started into one of Zane Grey's novels which had been given to me along with the key when I checked in. Although conditions remained terrible I did work a few Europeans: G3VJP popped out of the noise for about 5 minutes at 1450z, there was a lengthy opening to CT and EA, and another to I2. F6EXV popped up at 2037z as did GJ3LFJ at 2110z. 40m sounded a little more lively the next evening with F5IN and DL8AN audible on CW, but no QSOs resulted and the bands were still pretty dead at 1430z when I started to dismantle the station to catch the 0900 boat back to San Pedro for my Manchester flight that afternoon.

Although I made relatively few QSOs from Catalina, the island does have 4 resident amateurs. About half of the QSOs registered on the IOTA database were made with K6MQT, Bill Hanberry, the other half were made by W6CR who is now a silent key. Bill's XYL Madeline is licensed as WA6AOE and a regular on the 40m YL nets in California. Bill and Madeline, now probably in their 80s are a charming couple with a fund of reminiscences about the great days of DXing - before SSB! They even have a UK connection as the late Nell Corrie, G2YL, was a friend of theirs who visited them on Catalina many years ago. The other two amateurs are KJ6YA who runs the broadcasting station and has a QTH on top of the hill and Dave Estrada, KC6UMG,

who has just upgraded from Technician and acquired a TH3 on a 60 foot crank-up tower.

All in all, it had been a short and moderately successful IOTA expedition without much help from the weather or propagation. The Channel Islands, both north and south, are well worth a visit if you are in Southern California. Forget Disneyland and head straight for Avalon.

ON THE OTHER END By Roger Western, G3SXW

We've finally arrived and are all set up. After all those months of planning, the set-backs, the long journey, the hard work getting antenna installed..we're ready for the first call. Will it all work OK? The SWRs are looking fine, everything seems set. But will we be loud enough? Will the propagation Gods smile on us? Is there sufficient antenna separation to avoid co-station QRM? Will the local mains electricity be stable enough? Will we smash every TV and radio in the area? Will rigs keep working? My goodness, talk about adrenalin! Especially at that moment when you're about to make the first contact your heart leaps into the throat. The prospect of it...just think! Everything SEEMS alright so maybe we're now in for another "fix" of pile-up operating. Watch out, fellers. Once the bug has bitten you can't leave it alone. It is totally addictive. Don't ever tell the wife "I've never been on a DXpedition - just this once"! The sheer thrill of it is hard to describe: handling a pile-up, handing out contacts as fast as one can manage with accuracy, knowing that everyone going into the log has either leaped for joy at finally getting the new one or at least has had their day marginally uplifted. The challenge of

getting all the callsigns right, of controlling things so as to maximise the number of contacts made during a short stay.....its a thrill all of its own. We're ready to go, checked the bands and ten is open, good stuff. Signals from Europe are pretty fair. Darn it, there's a rag-chew right on "my" frequency as listed in the DX magazines in the pre-trip publicity. Can't slam straight on top of an ongoing QSO. What to do: call a KHz away - uggh, there's another contact. OK, so just QRX a moment, they're signing. Use the time to check the computer-logging by putting in a dummy contact. Yes, its all working fine.

THE FIRST QSO

That's it, they've finished: "CQ 3DA/G3SXW", at 25wpm. Nothing! "CQ 3DA/G3SXW". Somebody sends a question-mark on frequency. "CQ 3DA/G3SXW". The first contact goes in the log. OH1ZZZ was the lucky one. Guess he'd been tuning the bands looking for something exciting all afternoon and happened across the frequency at precisely the right moment. He won't know until receiving the QSL card that he was the very first contact. He sends "599 TU", I send "TU 3DA/G3SXW". Ha, things are starting to happen, there are three callers. Amazing then how fast folks cotton on and the band erupts into that sweet sound of cacophonous CW. Seems we're getting out OK! Stay at 25wpm for the first four or five contacts, then realise that the pile is already growing too big. Next time its "TU 3DA/G3SXW UP2 UP2 UP2", having already set the split on the TS930. Amazing, only one signal calls instantly two up. He's a smart cookie and goes straight in the log. At the

start of a new pile-up its all about lightning-fast reactions. After the second QSO with split the whole pile has latched on and they're layers deep. Can't pick out whole callsigns any longer so I go back to "G4B?". Is that BUE, BUO, BWP, BKI, BLX? Sure enough its BUO, first G in the log for this trip. In the QRM you're often guessing what the full call might be. Intuition takes over sometimes: you're only hearing Europe just now and miss the prefix. Its "something-OABC". With that suffix it could be a G or an I, but definitely not a F or OK. Scandinavia is loud but its can't be an OZ and its unlikely to be a LA so I'll plump for SM. The brain keeps whizzing. Next time the continuous callers still don't let up (I wonder if they ever stop transmitting to listen?!) and I miss it again. He sent it twice and the time delay seems to confirm my guess, its too long for "I". Not good enough. I go back "SM0ABC?". He sends it three times and I copy it once, in the clear. That was a good guess! I repeat his call back to him twice, contact completed.

QSL VIA?

We're now running at around 150 an hour, each contact taking an average of 25 seconds. About one half of all European callers add a longer message which slows things down somewhat. Things like TNX QSO, PSE QSL, TNX NEW COUNTRY. It must be just habit I suppose, or maybe they've been calling for a while and reckon they now deserve a fuller exchange than everyone else. I've made 30 contacts and have eased the keyer up to about 34 wpm. Now slow down and give QSL information, repeated. Guess what? You guessed it! The very next station says "QSL VIA?".

Grrrrr - don't get irritable now, that doesn't help anything. Ignore the request and carry on with the next contact. If he stays listening he'll pick it up on your next QTC message. Or maybe he only asked as a way of doubly confirming that you're working him and copying him OK? We're now twenty minutes in and everything is going fine. Most contacts are now started with only a part call, signals being all similar in strength. Got to keep up the rhythm though: go back to something if only a prefix or a "QRZ?", then everyone knows how long they can transmit before having to listen again. Leaving long gaps and especially irregular gaps between transmissions can account for much of the chaos that often ensues. Every now and again a louder signal blasts through and is quite a relief, an easy one to copy.

HORNET'S NEST

Up two has become a veritable hornet's nest, can't pick out anything but single letters or numerals. Nudge the main dial up a fraction. Sure enough nearly everyone is right on the split RX frequency, but there's a weaker DL just a tad up the band, about 80Hz. He goes in the log and a bigger EA blasts through right on that frequency. It then takes only one or two more contacts and the pile has cottoned on and QSYed that fraction. Another ten contacts and the hornet's nest sound is again completely impenetrable. Move up another 50-100Hz, sure enough a weaker station gets in the log easily. After 20 minutes of this I realise that the RX frequency has drifted up to about 4KHz above the TX frequency, and sure enough there are still many callers spread across those 4KHz. Don't want to pollute

the whole band with QRM, so quickly swing the dial back down to only one KHz up, and start the whole process all over. Every pile-up operator has his own operating style but if the pattern can be discerned then there's a much increased chance of getting the contact. If you're not getting through because you're weaker than the rest of the pile and simply getting drowned out, then call about 100Hz above the centre of the pile-up. If you're semi in the clear you may well be the first to be picked up when I shift RX frequency up that little bit. Settled in now, adrenalin flooding through the veins, but concentrating well. Someone walks into the room but I hardly notice. A station has sent his 599 and now is saying CUL LF BANDS, again slowing the rate and making everyone else in the pile wait that bit longer. But hang on - ho ho - a great tail-ender puts my brain in overdrive. I hear "N7NG" sent once at about 42wpm and about 30Hz off the frequency of the UB5 I'm listening to. The end of his call coincides with the "TU" of the UB5. I send "TU WAYNE 5NN", he just sends "5NN TU". That contact took about nine seconds...love it!! Got to punch that call into the computer extra-fast so hit the "TU 3DA/G3SXW" memory button on the keyer and hit the Return on the laptop to log the contact just in time to start copying the next caller. I take a quick micro-second look at the TX frequency and there's only one station sending "UP" so I reckon things are going OK. In fact, I know that my frequency is clear enough because stations are coming right back and I'm not having to give any repeats. Either the DX policemen have taken the day off or perhaps they haven't anything to do. Propagation is helping too because much

of the QRM that might be on my frequency (caused more by policemen than intruders) is not being heard by the rest of those calling in the pile-up.

QUESTIONS QUESTIONS

Finished the first hour. Now, don't get upset. I've just been asked the first of what will be many questions. When QSY to top-band?! Give us a chance lads - I haven't a clue! Let's pound through the pile-ups for a day or two first then spend the time finding out when the openings are likely to be on the specialist bands. No, I'm not QRV RTTY and sorry, we're not equipped for six metres, nor AMTOR on 93000Ghz, nor 3000wpm bursts via meteor-scatter on the reverse side of the moon! Questions, questions...they can get you down! Anything important is announced at regular intervals so how about LISTENING? Once, after a 12-hour session as H44SX towards the end of the trip, I remember reacting with just a smidgen of sarcasm to the umpteenth question with a 15wpm transmission giving QSL route, full QTH address, name, rig, antennas and ended with "socks black". I was alone in the shack but promptly descended into a fit of uncontrollable giggles. It can get you that way! Actually, the idea is to hand out the very maximum possible number of contacts - that's what the expedition is all about - so guys slowing things down by asking questions are just being selfish. They've got into the log themselves and now are holding up everyone else.

BRAIN IN GEAR

Hang on now, give this some thought. Europe is loud but N7NG did get through

for the first North American contact. He was really weak. Could just wait a while and see if W's break through the pile of their own accord? But we're only a half-hour off sunset here so the band is going to die soon. Let's give them a chance: "QRZ N AM QRZ N AM ONLY UP 2 UP 2 N AM". Wow, just listen to that. There's a zillion S2-3 signals calling! They're copying me OK evidently but its going to be very hard to pick out their calls. As always, one or two are just that fraction louder than the rest so part calls start to come through. Contact rate has slowed down but its worth it not to miss an unusual opening. It might be the only one of the trip. The 6s and 7s are loudest so maybe the peak was earlier. Got to keep brain in gear the whole time, especially about propagation. Where to point the beam, which bands to move to, when and where will those brief openings occur, especially to the furthest areas of the world? Shall I go by call areas to help alleviate the QRM and help picking out calls? Rather not, it does lock you into a cycle that has to be completed and if propagation shifts in the meantime then you have a lot of frustrated guys who have waited patiently and not had a shot at getting in the log. It'll nearly always slow the rate overall so I much prefer to use directional calls only to broad areas, like Europe, N America, JA.

IN THE SWING

And so things progress. Keep the rate up, make sure everyone knows that I have their call accurately in the log, keep brain in gear, think on the next band change, and especially - above all else - give my own call-sign very frequently. When the QSO rate is fast and furious I'm content

to sign every 2-3 contacts because that's still every one minute or so, with information messages every 5-10 minutes (QSL route, QTH). Overall, there are clear-cut objectives: give everyone a fair chance of getting in the log, be sure that frustration levels are minimised and that they know who you are. We're now well settled into the routine for the duration of the expedition. It all blurs into one amorphous mass, punctuated by sleep, maybe a daily meal with co-operators, maybe an antenna or rig problem. What day is it? Its five days to go, but don't know the day of the week. What time is it in W6 right now? No idea, have to reach for the DX-Edge to be sure not to miss any important grey-line LF openings. These days the annual expedition is the big event in my calendar. The chance to be on the other end of the pile-up again. After each trip and the enormous flood of QSLs it seems to take progressively less and less time before the pileupitis symptoms start to manifest themselves again. Where next? Thought for the day: the skills necessary for pile-up operating are similar to those for contesting. Commitment, stamina, alertness, fair-play. Yet another spin-off benefit of contests.

Hope to CU on several bands from ZD9 in October. 73.

SPONSORED TANDEM PARACHUTE JUMP *Roy Andreang*, G4CMT

'Skip Roy' Andreang is asking you as a scouter, scout, radio amateur, friend, or even just because you would like to, to sponsor him on his final parachute jump on behalf of the Scouts & Guides.

I will be transmitting on the Radio Amateur Bands 145.525 kHz, hopefully contacting Radio Amateurs, Scouts & Guides who are located over Yorkshire and the North of England from 10,000 feet above the ground.

The aim of the appeal is to raise enough money to buy a second hand Porta Cabin type of building, to use as a 'Radio Shack' for the training of Scouters, Scouts, and Guides in the skills of Amateur Radio, Computers, and Electronic Badge work.

A special call sign for the Raywell Park Training Centre will be applied for when we are in a position to do so. The RSGB will help.

I could of course just give a donation of £150 (which is the cost of the parachute jump), but if I can turn this amount into £500 or more, my ambition will have been realised.

I am nearly 70 years of age - 62 years have been spent devoted to the 'Aims of Scouting' and 'Helping Others', so I ask you to please consider this appeal seriously.

All moneys raised will go into the fund with no expenses being deducted. An account has been opened with Lloyds Bank plc, Paragon Street, Hull, under Raywell Park Scout Radio Parachute Appeal, account number 7245501. Postal Orders, cheques, etc. can be sent to the bank, or to my address above.

I hope to parachute at the former RAF Station at Topcliffe, North Yorkshire (The Merlin Parachute Centre Club Tel 0748 8753 367) on Sat/Sun 18/19 September, weather permitting.

Thanks are due to the following who have helped so far:

The Humberside County
Commissioner
Raywell Park Management
Committee

Peter Rodmell Communications
(who has loaned the radio
equipment)

My dear wife and all my family
Finally, my doctor, who has passed
me as 'Fit to Jump'

My call sign is G4CMT/Parachute Mobile.

CDXC BARBECUE AT G/OZ7SM

It was a sunny day in May when many CDXC members and their families made the journey to Herb Assmussen's QTH in Worcestershire. Herb and his wife Maura had very kindly invited CDXC members to a barbecue at their superb home. Beryl, my XYL, and I travelled up with Mike, G4PFF, and his XYL Ann. Even the journey up was fruitful, as I worked Martin, G4ENZ/M on 2m, and managed to recruit him and his XYL Penny, G0NVP, as CDXC members, after explaining that CDXC is now a National club!

After drooling over Georges, (G3LNS) 100' plus tower, which we could hardly miss from the M42, we had little problem finding Herb and Maura's QTH. Herb assures me that Maura chose the QTH, and that radio played little or no part in the choice - however, it turned out to be an ideal radio QTH, situated on top of a hill, with excellent take off all round, and terrific views also. As well as being a first class QTH for radio purposes, it was an ideal venue for the CDXC Barbecue.

Maura and Herb had certainly gone all out to make us all welcome - with plentiful supplies of drink and gourmet style food, including Herb's renowned potato salad! It was great to see such a good turn out at the event. Guests included G3PJT,

G3PMR, G4PFF, G3SNN, G3NUG, G3LNS, G3NAS, G3KDB, G3YBT, JG3FAR, G3NKC, G3XMZ, G3WGV, G4BKJ, G0CCI, G4IUF, and GW0RTA/JA3AER plus attachments!

Herb gave tours of his *two* shacks (one of which is being built as a club contest station, and is completely separate from the house); his linear made my mouth water!

All in all a terrific day was had by all - excellent weather, a superb venue, first class hosts, and good company; truly one of the most enjoyable amateur radio social events that I have attended in recent years. On behalf of all who attended, Herb and Maura, may I say a big thank you.

Alan Jubb, G3PMR

A NOSTALGIC LOOK BACK

Ron Glaisher G6LX

The second world war ended in mid-August 1945 and there was a prior agreement between the major powers that all allied pre-war licences should be activated on an agreed date to be announced, preferably within three months of the end of hostilities. Many military commanders did not wait, but gave immediate permission for amateurs in the services to operate on the amateur bands and a number of special XA callsigns were issued. This activity, encouraged other amateurs to jump the gun and by the time the USA started to issue licences in November, (for limited operation on parts of the 28 and 56MHz bands only), there were many hundreds of pirates on the bands using a variety of 'funny' callsigns.

The GPO were somewhat tardy in providing the same privileges as the USA, claiming that the bands were still needed by the military! It was not until mid-January 1946 that the GPO got their act together and started to issue UK licences. By then

there were many G stations among the pirates and it possibly the blatant nature of this activity that speeded up the licensing procedures.

Initially the bands available in the UK were 28-29MHz and 58.5-60MHz, the same as the USA, although the UK was given the use of 'Top Band' later in the year, followed by parts of 7 and 14MHz. Later in the year the full pre-war band allocations of 28-30, 14.0-14.4 and 7.0-7.3MHz were allocated followed by permission to use 3.5MHz on a shared basis with the military. It should be noted that the 7MHz allocation was short lived as Region 1 lost the top 200kHz and parts of the 28 and 14MHz bands at the first post-war ITU Conference in Atlantic City in late 1947.

At first, licences were only issued to those that had held pre-war full and artificial aerial licences, but it was not very long before licences were available to those who held service qualifications. These newly licensed amateurs were allocated callsigns in the G3 three letter suffix series, commencing with G3AAA. Pre-war licensees retained their original callsigns, either a two letter suffix or a G2 with a three letter suffix. Once licensing had been established, the net was widened and applications accepted from qualified engineers and technicians who were able to pass the Morse test. A few months later the input for new licensees was opened further with the introduction of the RAE.

There was a sun-spot maximum in 1946/7 and conditions on 28MHz were incredibly good with long openings to all parts of the world. (some say these were the best ever openings on 28MHz). Coupled with these excellent conditions, there were amateurs in the services located in many exotic locations which gave many of the newly licensed their first taste of dx. Imagine being able to rag chew with stations such as W2WMV/C9 in Manchuria, AC4RF in

Tibet, the Cocos Islands, North Borneo and virtually every island in the Pacific where there was a US military presence. British and Commonwealth forces in Libya, Irak, Egypt, Sudan, India, Ceylon, Burma and many other Asian and Indian Ocean countries provided a further wide spread of contacts. Transmitters were mainly home-brew or conversions from 'liberated' military equipment and the 'norm' was the dipole or long-wire antenna. (although there were a few W8JK's and other driven arrays), it was several years before the rotary yagi caught-on !)

Surplus gear was cheap and readily available, for example, the Admiralty were selling off brand new receivers, transmitters, valves and components as scrap and these were available to amateurs at a price of 50 shilling per cwt ! Operation on the bands was a mix of CW and Amplitude Modulation and the licensed power was initially limited to 50 watts input (often with an 807 pa) and it was later increased to 100 watts (807's in p-p) and then to 150 watts in 1950 (813).

At first, most transmitters were crystal controlled and tuning the band for contacts was the name of the game, however, with the allocation of the 14MHz band, VFO operation started to catch-on together with the custom of calling on the transmitting station's frequency. With simple gear and the superb conditions, regular, almost daily, world wide contacts were made with ease and this gave the newly licensed a completely false impression of normal amateur operation. For those of us with pre-war licenses who could remember the sense of achievement in making a dx contact and working for a WAC certificate, it was all too confusing and we very quickly became blasé.

In mid-1947, ARRL announced that they would be starting to re-issue their DXCC award and persons having the necessary

100 QSL's should apply. By the time ARRL were ready to start the checking process, there were over 500 applications in the pipeline. Not to be outdone, RSGB, introduced the Empire DX Certificate for working 50 British Empire zones on 14MHz and another 50 on other bands. This was a very special award being hand embossed on vellum and was greatly sought after, however, getting the 50 zones on 14MHz proved much harder than a 100 countries on 28MHz for DXCC and only 40 or so of the new certificates were awarded in the first year. With 10m. open to the USA for hours on end, it was fairly easy to make a WAS, particularly as KH6 and KL7 were not required at that time. There was no hassle with QSL cards as nearly everyone honoured a request for a card and there was no need for 'green stamps' or IRC's as the majority of cards were routed through the bureaux. It was certainly a different ball game !

For those of us that were fortunate to have participated in the greatest dx chase of all-time, the period between 1946 and 1950 are years that will never be forgotten!

CHRISTMAS DINNER

Chiltern dinner was rather good meeting Hams, never thought I would, from all around the globe they came, my Hubby knew most all by name, eating dinner not so plain I listened to your talk in vain, a word I never understood, but dinner was really rather good, I'd go again to meet the best and hope some day to meet the rest, Chiltern DX Club you are good, I'd come to dinner again if I could.

Marion Dodd, XYL G3XNZ.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Carl Kratzer, G0SLY/K3RV, has moved. His new QTH is:

Manor Farm Barn
Radstone
Brackley
Northants NN13 5PZ
0280 705676

CDXC entry for HF Field Day - 05/06 June 1993

Organization for this event had, as usual, been started well in advance. The club entry was to be in the restricted section. The operating team was to be G3OZF, G3XMZ, G3YBT, G4DQW and G4WVX. G0HSD was unable to be there this year as he was abroad, although he had organized permission for the site at Bledlow Ridge, near Princes Risborough. G3OZF had organized a four wheel drive vehicle to help with lugging the gear up the steep muddy hill, as well as providing most of the equipment.

On the Friday evening I received an urgent phone call from G3OZF explaining that he had done his back in while moving the Generator (I'd not heard of that brand of beer!) and was now horizontally polarised and out of service for the weekend at least. Since the mainstay of the team consisted of G3OZF, G4DQW and G0HSD and now two of the three were unavailable, a certain level of panic set in!

Several frantic phone calls followed and the decision was made to go ahead anyway - it was bound to be more fun than going to work as normal on a Saturday. The most important problem was to source another four wheel drive vehicle - only G3OZF was allowed to drive the one that he had organized. Fortunately, G4DQW managed to persuade a pal to help out with his freshly washed vehicle and so saved the morning. G4WVX persuaded G4WJS to help out with his vehicle for the Sunday afternoon.

G4WVX and G0BON dashed round to G3OZF's QTH in two cars early on the Saturday morning to transport all the gear to the bottom of the hill near the site. The team assembled at about 10.00 hrs and soon afterwards the various bits of contest station began to come together.

The antenna had yet to be constructed and was to be a 270 foot inverted Vee with the centre at 35 feet and an open wire feeder. G3XMZ's son Eddie was invaluable with his monkey-like tree-climbing abilities finding a mounting point for one end of the antenna. All was going so well until little could be heard on the FT-990 - even with the antenna connected! Further head-scratching, including doing the sums again, finally traced the problem to the ATU. Once this had been solved - more help from the horizontal G3OZF, by Vodafone this time - all was well and we were ready to go with only about ten minutes before the start time. The PC and G3WGV's LOG worked perfectly.

Operating was done in pairs in two to four hour sessions. Saturday evening dinner was in shifts at the nearby(!) pub - the walk back up the hill was interesting to say the least. The weather was absolutely gorgeous for the whole weekend.

The submitted entry was as follows:

Band	1.8	3.5	7.0	14	21	28	Total
Valid QSOs	87	171	160	145	68	48	679
Score	692	660	596	488	241	348	3025

Many thanks to all those who took part, as mentioned above, and not least to G3OZF's wife Chris who stepped in when Don's back failed, running around sorting out food and equipment.

Bruce Gilson, G4WVX

EXPENDITURE

Notes: 1- 91/2 Mail costs included. 2- 92/3 Room hire donated
3- No VAT payable 92/3 4- 92/3 purchase Stapler
5- 91/2 Subs shown net 6- £150 Willis, £300 each
For Baker/Howland & KHS/SK

LIABILITIES

(Signed)

12 May 1993

TREASURER

I have examined the accounts for the period shown and confirm that in my opinion:

- 1- Proper books of account have been maintained
- 2- The Profit and Loss account shown above, together with the Balance Sheet is a correct statement of the clubs financial position as at 10 May 1993.

(Signed)

AUDITOR

John Greenall
1899 (29/11/2)